

Here Today, Gone Tomorrow

By KELLY CLARK

On July 16, the pond off of Bay Farm Road was full of life and full of water. Three days later, it disappeared.

Neighbors and pond-goers began to wonder where it had gone, including Terry Fitzpatrick of Bay Farm Road, who said, "Out of nowhere it went down about four feet, like someone had pulled the plug."

This roughly half-acre pond

has been around since the 1940s, when it was built by the seminarians at Miramar Retreat House. Fitzpatrick said that from there, it became a swimming pond and many of the kids in town learned to swim there in the '50s and '60s.

Fitzpatrick described it as a "delightful little fishing pond...it looks like something out of Brothers Grimm."

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Duxbury Clipper

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Bay Farm pond disappears

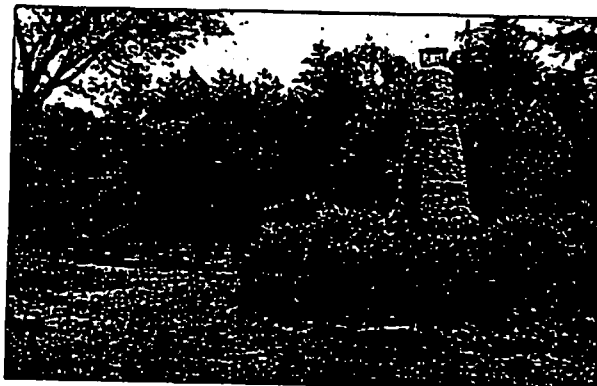
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"When Bay Farm was built in 1983, they couldn't get a permit for the pond to be a swimming pond and put fish in instead...five to six pound large mouth bass," Fitzpatrick said.

After the water in the pond vanished, Fitzpatrick said the fish, turtles, water fowl and other pond life struggled to survive. "Several of us who are fish people took 20 or 30 [fish] at a time, put them in containers and carried them down to a lower pond," he said.

"People tried to tell me it was the supply but that goes down gradually," Fitzpatrick said. Instead, he said he believed that the pumping system at the lower end of the pond had failed.

According to Bob Burnham, one of the Bay



The lighthouse standing in the middle of the once-full pond looks out over mud instead of water.

Farm Association trustees, the pond disappearance was not caused by a pumping system failure and he is currently looking into possible causes and solutions.

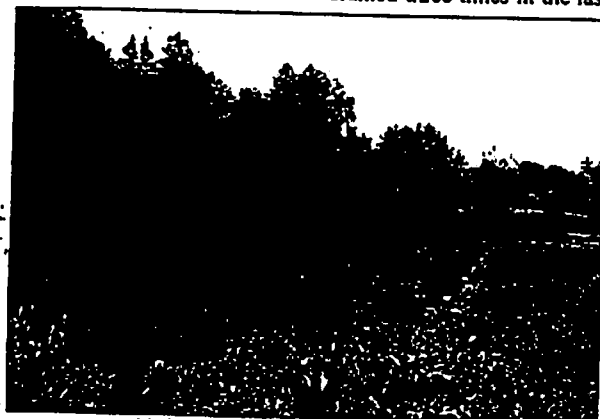
"This is not the first time in history this has happened," Burnham said. In fact, Burnham said the pond has drained three times in the last

18 years. This time, Burnham has been working with Conservation Administrator Joe Grady to figure out why the pond disappeared in three to four days.

While Burnham said no one has definite answers yet, he is in the process of hiring a consultant "whose profession is analyzing problems like this." As a temporary solution, Burnham said he has hired a contractor who will be plugging the holes in the lower end of the pond within the next two days.

Even though the cause of the pond's disappearance is uncertain, Burnham said his suspicion is that the watering going on in the bogs across Route 3A may possibly be reducing the water flow in the pond.

"All I know is that one day I had a beautiful pond that my wife loved and the next day it was gone," Fitzpatrick said.



As of now, no one has a certain answer as to the cause of the pond's disappearance; both water and pond life have vanished.